THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Presumably the question seeks information on number of casual labour on Railways. As on 1-4-1989 approximately 1.92 Lakhs casual labour are working on Railways.

(b) and (c) Barring certain exceptions. virtually all the vacancies in Group D, are at present, being filled by absorption of casual labour/substitutes after screening. Absorption of casual labour/substitutes in regular employment is however. subject to factors like availability of vacancies and eligibility and suitability of such individuals for regular employment. In the past few years approximately 50,000 posts have been created to facilitate absorption of casual labour in regular employment.

Setting up of deep sea fishing harbour on North West Coast

567. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a group has been constituted to select a suitable location for setting up of deep sea fishing harbour on the North West Coast;

(b) whether the Group has considered the suitability of Agagardanda in Maharasthra from all technical points of view for setting up of the harbour; and

(b) if not, what are the other locations being considered for the purpose ?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) and (c) The Group has considered the suitability of Agardanda in Maharasthra for development of a deep sea fishing harbour. The Group has also considered the suitability of location another deep sea fishing harbour at Okha in Gujarat.

Number of physically handicapped persons in the Country

568. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of the physically handicapped persons in the country;

(b) the details of the institutions functioning in the country who provide suitable training to them in different skills;

(c) the number of handicapped persons who are gainfully employed; and

(d) the schemes under way for further expanding the training facilities for the handicapped persons?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) According to a Survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation in 1981 there were 12 million physically handicapped persons in the country which constituted 1.8% of the total population.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House (*See* below).

(c) Information regarding the total number of handicapped gainfully employed is not available. However, during the year 1989 alone, employment exchanges/ Special Employment Exchanges and Vocational Rehabilitation Centres were able to rehabilitate over 9000 handicapped persons. In addition, a large number of physically handicapped persons are em ployed in private sector or are self employed.